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Message Text

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L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SAJ-01

SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /084 W
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O 171420Z FEB 76
FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1423
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0047

NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJ: MBFR: SOVIET REP SUMMARIZES NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: SOVIET REP KHLESTOV REQUESTED US REP AND DEPREP TO CALL ON HIM AT SOVIET EMBASSY EVENING OF FEB 16. KHLESTOV GAVE US REPS BRIEF SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL HE SAID HE WOULD PRESENT IN INFORMAL SESSION OF FEB 17. SPEAKING WITHOUT NOTES, KHLESTOV SAID NEW PROPOSAL WOULD BE THAT IN FIRST STAGE ONLY US AND SOVIETS WOULD REDUCE BY AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO 2 OR 3 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL MANPOWER OF TROOPS OF ITS OWN SIDE IN CENTRAL EUROPE. IN STAGE ONE, REMAINING DIRECT PARTICIPANTS ON EACH SIDE WOULD OBLIGATE THEMSELVES TO REDUCE THEIR ARMED FORCES IN A SECOND STAGE AND WOULD ALSO UNDERTAKE AN OBLIGATION
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NOT TO INCREASE THE MANPOWER OF THEIR FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

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REDUCTIONS IN BOTH STAGES WOULD COVER ALL THE ARMED SERVICES,
ALL THE ARMAMENTS AND COMBAT EQUIPMENT INCLUDING NUCLEAR WEAPONS
OF THOSE REDUCING IN THAT STAGE. END SUMMARY.

2. KHLESTOV WAS ACCOMPANIED BY SHUSTOV. HE SPOKE WITHOUT NOTES.
HE SAID HE HAD REQUESTED US REPS TO VISIT HIM IN ORDER TO
INFORM THEM AS WAS THE PRACTICE IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS, ABOUT
THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS WERE GOING TO SUBMIT A NEW PROPOSAL
IN THE INFORMAL SESSION OF FEB 17. THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROPOSAL
WAS TO FIND A PRACTICAL WAY TO MAKE PROGRESS IN THE VIENNA
NEGOTIATIONS. THE SOVIETS CONSIDERED IT A NEW AND IMPORTANT
STEP. THIS NEW MOVE WAS A JOINT INITIATIVE OF THE FOUR
GOVERNMENTS OF THE EASTERN DIRECT PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES,
WHICH ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THIS NEW MOVE.

3. KHLESTOV SAID THE MAIN IDEAS OF THE NEW PROPOSAL WERE (A)
MEETING THE POSITION OF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES, THE PROPOSAL
PROVIDED FOR INITIAL REDUCTIONS OF US AND SOVIET ARMED FORCES;
(B) IN PRACTICE, THIS REDUCTION WOULD BE THE FIRST OF TWO
STAGES OF REDUCTIONS; (C) IN THE FIRST STAGE, ONLY US AND
SOVIET FORCES WOULD BE REDUCED BY AN AMOUNT EQUIVALENT
TO 2 OR 3 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL MANPOWER IN THE AREA OF NATO FORCES
FOR THE US, AND FOR THE USSR AN AMOUNT EQUIVALENT TO 2 TO 3
PERCENT OF THE TOTAL FORCES OF THE WARSAW PACT DIRECT PARTICIPANTS
STATIONED IN THE AREA. THE REMAINING DIRECT PARTICIPANTS
WOULD UNDERTAKE AN OBLIGATION TO REDUCE THEIR ARMED FORCES
IN A SECOND STAGE AFTER THE REDUCTION OF SOVIET AND US FORCES
IN THE FIRST STAGE. IN THE FIRST STAGE, ALL OTHER DIRECT PARTICI-
PANTS WOULD UNDERTAKE AN OBLIGATION NOT TO INCREASE THE MANPOWER
OF THEIR ARMED FORCES. THE PROPOSAL ENVISAGED REDUCTION OF
ALL ARMED SERVICES, ALL ARMS AND COMBAT EQUIPMENT INCLUDING
NUCLEAR WEAPONS, OF THOSE PARTICIPANTS REDUCING IN EACH OF THE
STAGES.

4. KHLESTOV SAID THESE WERE THE MAIN IDEAS IN THE NEW EASTERN
PROPOSAL. THEY WOULD BE PRESENTED IN A MORE DETAILED WAY IN
THE FEB 17 INFORMAL.

5. US REP SAID HE WANTED TO ASK ONE OR TWO FACTUAL QUESTIONS
TO SEE IF HE UNDERSTOOD THE SOVIET PROPOSAL CORRECTLY. THE
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PROPOSAL WOULD PROVIDE FOR A REDUCTION OF US AND SOVIET FORCES
ONLY BY 2-3 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL MANPOWER ON THE RESPECTIVE
SIDES. WOULD ARMAMENTS BE REDUCED IN ADDITION TO MANPOWER?
KHLESTOV SAID THE EASTERN PROPOSAL WOULD PROVIDE NOT ONLY FOR
MANPOWER REDUCTIONS, BUT A REDUCTION OF A CERTAIN NUMBER OF
ARMAMENTS AND COMBAT EQUIPMENT AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS. HE
SAID THAT, AT THIS POINT, HE WAS NOT ABLE TO GIVE MORE DETAIL
THAN THIS.

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6. US REP ASKED WHAT WERE THE ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF REDUCTIONS INVOLVED IN THE 2 OR 3 PERCENT FIGURE? WAS THERE A CHOICE BETWEEN 2 PERCENT OR 3 PERCENT? KHLESTOV REPLIED, NON-COMMITTALLY, THAT THE EASTERN PROPOSAL WOULD PROVIDE FOR A REDUCTION OF EITHER 2 OR 3 PERCENT BASED ON THE TOTAL MANPOWER OF EACH ALLIANCE.

7. US REP ASKED WHAT WOULD BE THE NUMBER OF SOVIET REDUCTIONS IF 3 PERCENT WERE TAKEN? KHLESTOV SAID THIS COULD BE CALCULATED AT A CERTAIN STAGE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

8. US DEPREP SAID A PROPOSAL COUCHED IN THESE TERMS OBVIOUSLY ASSUMED AN EXCHANGE OF DATA OR AN AGREED DATA BASE. WAS THIS CORRECT? KHLESTOV FIRST REPLIED, THAT, A GIVEN STAGE IN THE DISCUSSION, THE EAST WOULD MAKE A PROPOSAL ON THIS. USDEPREP REPEATED THE QUESTION. KHLESTOV THEN REPLIED HE DID NOT THINK SUCH A CONCLUSION AUTOMATICALLY FOLLOWED FROM WHAT HE HAD JUST SAID. BUT IN THE LONG RUN, WHEN REDUCTIONS TOOK PLACE, A CERTAIN CLARITY WOULD APPEAR AS FAR AS DATA WAS CONCERNED.

9. US REP ASKED WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THE COMMITMENT TO REDUCE IN STAGE TWO THAT ALLIES WOULD UNDERTAKE IN FIRST STAGE? KHLESTOV SAID THE MAIN IDEA WAS THAT THESE PARTICIPANTS WOULD COMMIT THEMSELVES NOT TO INCREASE THEIR MANPOWER OR FORCES IN THE FIRST STAGE. IN ADDITION, THEY WOULD UNDERTAKE A "GENERAL" OBLIGATION TO REDUCE THEIR FORCES IN THE SECOND STAGE. THIS WAS ALL THE DETAIL HE COULD ADD AT THIS TIME TO WHAT HE HAD ALREADY SAID.

10. US REP SAID, THEN THIS WOULD ONLY BE AN OBLIGATION TO PARTICIPATE IN REDUCTIONS IN THE SECOND STAGE? KHLESTOV NODDED CONFIRMATION.

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11. US REP SAID HE HAD ONE MORE GENERAL QUESTION. WHAT DID KHLESTOV SEE AS REALLY NEW ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL AS COMPARED WITH WHAT THE EAST HAD PROPOSED EARLIER IN THEIR FIRST STEP AND FREEZE PROPOSALS? KHLESTOV HAD SAID EARLIER THAT THIS NEW PROPOSAL WAS A SIGNIFICANT ONE. KHLESTOV REPLIED THAT HE WISHED TO SAY THERE WERE MANY NEW ASPECTS OF THE EASTERN PROPOSAL. HE WOULD GIVE A CLEAR EXPLANATION OF THESE IN THE FEB 17 SESSION, SO THAT US REPS WOULD HAVE A CLEAR IDEA.

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NSCE-00 USIE-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 IO-11

L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SAJ-01

SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /084 W
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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1424
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

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NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

12. US DEPREP SAID, AS HE UNDERSTOOD IT THE BASIC IDEA OF THE EASTERN PROPOSAL WAS THAT THE PRESENT FORCE RELATIONSHIP SHOULD BE USED AS THE BASIS OF REDUCTIONS ON AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE BASIS. WOULD THIS ALSO BE TRUE FOR STAGE TWO? KHLESTOV SAID THIS WAS NOT THE BASIC IDEA OF THE EASTERN PROPOSAL ALTHOUGH IT WAS ONE OF ITS ELEMENTS. HE WOULD SPEAK MORE OF THIS ON THE NEXT OCCASION. HE ALSO WANTED TO STRESS THAT EASTERN REPS WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WESTERN DESIRES TO HAVE FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE WESTERN DECEMBER 16 PROPOSAL. EASTERN REPS WOULD GIVE FURTHER COMMENTS ON THIS PROPOSAL IN THE FEBRUARY 17 SESSION. WESTERN REPS HAD ALLEGED THAT THE EAST DESIRED NOT TO DEAL FURTHER WITH THE WESTERN PROPOSAL. THIS WAS NOT THE CASE. THE EAST WOULD DISCUSS THE WESTERN PROPOSAL FURTHER.

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13. US DEPREP ASKED WHETHER THE FIRST STAGE WOULD BE EXPRESSED

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IN ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OR PERCENTAGES? KHLESTOV SAID THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE IN TERMS OF PERCENTAGES NOT IN TERMS OF ABSOLUTE NUMBERS. US DEP REP ASKED WHETHER THE FREEZE WOULD BE PUT IN NUMBERS OR IN GENERALLY-PHRASED LANGUAGE. KHLESTOV SAID HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION AT THIS TIME.

14. US REP SAID HE APPRECIATED KHLESTOV'S GIVING THIS INFORMATION IN ADVANCE. HE WOULD LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THE PRESENTATION ON FEB 17. WESTERN REPS WOULD THEN REPORT THE EASTERN PROPOSAL TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS. IN DUE COURSE, THEY WOULD GIVE THEIR COMMENTS. HOWEVER, HE WISHED TO MAKE ONE COMMENT ON A PURELY PERSONAL BASIS. BASED ON THE LITTLE HE HAD HEARD OF THE NEW PROPOSAL THUS FAR, IT SEEMED TO HIM STILL TO BE A PROPOSAL AIMED AT CONTRACTUALIZING THE EXISTING RELATIONSHIP OF GROUND FORCES IN THE AREA. IF THIS WAS SO, IT WAS TO HIM QUITE DISAPPOINTING AS A RESPONSE TO THE WESTERN PROPOSAL OF DEC 16. WESTERN PARTICIPANTS HAD TRIED TO MAKE A GENERAL CONCEPTUAL BREAKTHROUGH IN ORDER TO BRING THE GAP BETWEEN THE EASTERN AND WESTERN PROPOSALS. JUDGING BY WHAT LITTLE KHLESTOV HAD SAID, THE EASTERN PROPOSAL DID NOT SEEM TO RESPOND TO THE WESTERN INITIATIVE.

15. KHLESTOV SAID HE WISHED TO STRESS THAT HE WAS INFORMING THE AMERICAN DELEGATION ONLY ON THE BASIS OF CONFIDENTIALITY BETWEEN THE DELEGATIONS. IT WAS NOT THE SOVIET INTENTION THAT US REP SHOULD INFORM ALL THE ALLIES. AS FOR US REP'S INITIAL, PERSONAL COMMENTS, IT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO GO DEEPLY AT THIS TIME INTO THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT AS FAR AS THE PROPOSALS OF BOTH SIDES WERE CONCERNED. HOWEVER HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE NEW PROPOSAL WAS A VERY SERIOUS PROPOSAL WHICH HAD BEEN STUDIED BY THE LEADERS OF THE EAST AT THE TOP LEVEL. ITS PURPOSE WAS TO TRY TO ACHIEVE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION FOR THE PROBLEMS UNDER DISCUSSION. THIS WAS WHY SOVIET REPS HOPED THE WEST WOULD PAY SERIOUS ATTENTION TO IT.

16. US REP SAID THE WEST WOULD OF COURSE GIVE THE PROPOSAL CAREFUL STUDY.RESOR

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FORCE & TROOP LEVELS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MBFRV00047
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760059-0148
From: MBFR VIENNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760243/aaaablxo.tel
Line Count: 259
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ACDA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NOFORN
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NOFORN
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 OCT 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 OCT 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <05 AUG 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

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04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: SOVIET REP SUMMARIZES NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL
TAGS: PARM, US, UR, NATO, MBFR
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006